

REMARKS

In an Office Action dated January 14, 2005, the Examiner objected to the Abstract because it is too long. Applicants are amending the Abstract to meet the limit of 150 words.

The Examiner objected to claims 2-3, 5, 8, 11 and 16 because of informalities. Applicants are amending claims 1 and 2 to meet the objection to claim 2, and are amending claims 3, 8, 11 and 16 to eliminate the colon, and are correcting the word "step" to read "steps" in claim 5. Applicants submit that these amendments should overcome the Examiner's objections. In claims 8 and 16, a comma has been substituted for the semi-colon after "Service Administration Terminal".

The Examiner rejected claims 2 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Applicants are amending these claims to recite "packet header address" which terms were introduced in independent claims 1 and 9.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-6, 9 and 11-14 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,771,674 (Schuster). Responsive to the grounds for these rejections, Applicants are amending the two independent claims 1 and 9 to recite their invention more particularly.

In pertinent part, Schuster discloses an arrangement for using the Internet to complete inter-city telephone calls. From each city, the local public switched telephone network and Internet telephone gateway (ITG) is used to access the Internet which connects the ITGs of the two cities involved in the telephone connection. In the example cited by the Examiner, the "guest switch" of Applicants' invention is cited as being the PSTN 4, effectively, a terminating switch connected to a terminating party L.

In contrast, Applicants' invention relates to a method and apparatus for permitting customer premises equipment to originate calls from a home switch or one of a plurality of guest switches. Once the customer premises equipment has been connected, via a packet network such as the Internet, either to the home switch for serving that customer or to one of the guest switches for serving that customer, the calls are effectively originated from the selected home or guest switch. The calls originated from either of these switches are then completed through the public switched telephone network or the

Internet to the terminating switch serving a called party. Thus, Applicants' guest switch is not a terminating switch for calls originated by the calling CPE, but is the switch which actually performs the originating function. For example, that switch stores a customer's abbreviated dialing list. This kind of operation allows inexpensive foreign exchange service, a service wherein customers in one city are treated for billing purposes as if they were in another city so that telephone calls originated by or terminated to that customer need not accumulate toll charges. Such a service is used, for example, to encourage customers in one city, or in a suburb, to call a store in another city without incurring toll charges.

Applicants had intended to indicate this characteristic in the claims by using the term "serving switch" for the switch which actually provides originating service to the CPE, either a home switch or a guest switch. In the claims as originally presented there was no discussion of the terminating switch serving a called party and Applicants are inserting additional information to simplify the distinction between a guest switch (for serving the calling CPE) and a terminating switch for serving a called customer by the addition of phrases defining the home switch or the guest switch as providing originating service to the CPE and indicating that outgoing calls from the CPE are originated from the selected switch and terminated on a terminating switch for serving a called number.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the teachings of Schuster do not anticipate the subject matter of Applicants' independent claims, claims 1 and 9.

Applicants are also adding two dependent claims to recite the subject matter recited on page 10, lines 11-13. By having a separate telephone number, the London guest switch can be accessed by a caller in London using a London number for completing calls to the CPE, while a caller from New York dials a New York number to access the CPE. The subject matter of these two dependent claims should be held allowable as being dependent from an allowable independent claim.

Applicants respectfully submit that in view of the more precise definition of their invention as presented in amended claims 1 and 9 and in view of the arguments presented above that claims 1 and 9 should be held allowable and claims 2-6, 10-14, and newly added claims 17 and 18 should be held allowable as being dependent from an allowable independent claim. Claims 7-8 and 15-16 had previously been held allowable if rewritten

in independent form; in case of a rejection Applicants are prepared to rewrite these claims.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections of the claims as amended, allow all 16 original claims plus claims 17 and 18 added herein, and pass the application to issue.

If the Examiner feels that a voice or fax contact would help to advance the prosecution of this application, he is invited to contact Applicants' attorney at telephone number 630 469-3575.

Respectfully submitted

C. W. Coffey et al.



by Werner Ulrich  
Attorney for Applicant  
Reg. No. 30810

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